

Some Synonymy in *Coniontellus* (Coleoptera: Tenebrionidae)

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In 1908, Col. Thomas L. Casey described three species from a series of the nondescript genus *Coniontellus* collected in and about Reno, Nevada (Washoe County), *C. hystrix*, *C. longipennis* and *C. ampliatus*. Previously (1890), he had described *C. inflatus* from the same locality, also from material he had collected. The late Dr. Frank E. Blaisdell, Sr., recognized the species *longipennis*, *ampliatus* and *inflatus* among my material from Reno and vicinity.

In his 1908 key to the species, Casey distinguished between *hystrix-longipennis* and *inflatus-ampliatus* by integumental coloration alone, listing the first two as "castaneous in color," and the remaining two species as "black." During a familiarity of nearly fifteen years with the genus as it is represented in the Truckee Meadows (in which Reno is situated), I was led to a perusal of the status of the four described species by the facts that (a) all of Casey's descriptions seemed to be rather arbitrarily drawn up with respect to the characters used in differentiating the species, (b) all his descriptions seemed to fit equally well any and all specimens of the very large series I had accumulated, and (c) such variation in size and coloration was exhibited by my specimens, some of it obviously seasonal, as to render these characters, as used by Casey, of little taxonomic significance.

After studying several hundred specimens of the genus from in and about Reno, I am convinced that but one species is present, a species exhibiting considerable variation in size and coloration, but no more abnormal in these respects than other species of *Coniontellus* and the closely-related and much larger genus *Coniontis*, with which Casey also experimented. Castaneous specimens are merely teneral. The synonymy should be indicated as:

Coniontellus inflatus Casey 1890*C. hystrix* Casey 1908*C. longipennis* Casey 1908*C. ampliatus* Casey 1908

As I have mentioned before (1946), no lasting interpretation of either *Coniontis* or *Coniontellus* (and related groups) will be possible until the taxonomic possibilities presented by the chaetotaxy of larvae are thoroughly investigated. And even then, it will be a major task to correlate such larvae with the adult descriptions of Casey. A consideration of the extensive synonymy in the now large genus *Coniontis* will be reserved for a future time.

REFERENCES

- CASEY, THOMAS L. 1890. Coleopterological notices II. Ann. N. Y. Acad. Sci., 5: 307-504.
———. 1908. A revision of the tenebrionid subfamily Coniontinae. Proc. Wash. Acad. Sci., 10: 51-166.
LA RIVERS, IRA. 1946. On the genus *Trogloderus* (Coleoptera: Tenebrionidae). Ent. News, 57 (2): 35-44.

Review

NATURE AND PREVENTION OF PLANT DISEASES. By K. Starr Chester. 2d ed. Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, 1947. Pp. xi + 525, 224 figs. \$5.00.

Entomologists that are fascinated with the complex life-histories of certain insects, e.g., *Adelges*, *Micromalthus*, will be amazed at the involved life-history of the organism causing stem rust of wheat that begins this text. Many other plant diseases are also described as to recognition, etiology and control. The book is a practical one but it also expounds clearly the scientific principles of plant pathology that are necessary for a true understanding of the disease-producing organisms. Some insect vectors mentioned are the leafhoppers that carry sugar-beet curly top, bees that carry fire-blight and the beetles that carry Dutch elm disease. In one instance at least, in peach yellows, the causative virus is transmitted in no other way except through the feeding of the leafhopper *Macropsis trimaculata*, in the body of which the virus must undergo an incubation period of from 8 to 28 days, after which it is found in the saliva.

The book is exceptionally well written, is concise yet very readable.—R. G. SCHMIEDER.